



LISTENING GUIDE

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The Rolling Stones, “The Last Time”

Words and music by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, produced by Andrew Loog Oldham. As a single, the song went to #9 on the Billboard Pop Charts in 1965, reaching #1 in the UK. It also appeared on the album *Out of Our Heads* (p1, uk2).

**FORM:** Contrasting verse chorus. Each chorus is followed by two measures that repeat the opening riff and lead back to the next verse, except at the end, where this riff is used to create the ending of the song. Note that the song features a reprise of the introduction at the end, similarly to The Ronettes’ “Be My Baby” (see Listening Guide in Chapter 3).

**TIME SIGNATURE:** 4/4 throughout except in the chorus, where three bars of 4/4 are followed by a bar of 2/4, then a bar of 4/4. The measure of 2/4 seems to be prompted by the vocal melody and seems quite natural, even if it is a little difficult to count out.

**INSTRUMENTATION:** electric and acoustic guitars, bass guitar, tambourine, drums, lead and backing vocals.

0:00–0:11	<b>Introduction</b> , 4 mm.	Opens with a guitar riff, with the rest of the band entering in the following bars.
0:11–0:34	<b>Verse 1</b> , 8 mm.	Vocal enters, as guitar riff continues. Backing vocals enter only at the ends of phrases. “I told you once . . .”
0:34–0:53	<b>Chorus</b> , 7 mm.	Sung in harmony throughout. Note the counting here: 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4, which mixes a bar of 2/4 in with bars of 4/4. The chorus ends with a return to the opening guitar riff, creating an interlude that leads to the next verse. “This could be . . .”

0:53–1:16	<b>Verse 2</b> , 8 mm.	As before, with little variation from verse 1. “I’m sorry girl . . .”
1:16–1:34	<b>Chorus</b> , 7 mm.	As before, harmony vocals enter, last two bars act as interlude to next verse. “This could be . . .”
1:34–1:57	<b>Instrumental Verse</b> , 8 mm.	Electric guitar solo is played over the same music that was used for verse 1 and 2.
1:57–2:16	<b>Chorus</b> , 7 mm.	Vocals return on the chorus, which is otherwise just like the previous two. “This could be . . .”
2:16–2:39	<b>Verse 3</b> , 16 mm.	Lead vocal returns to the lyrics of the first verse. “I told you once . . .”
2:39–2:51	<b>Chorus</b> , 5 mm.	The first five measures of this chorus unfold as they have previously, but this time the guitar riff that follows is used to create the ending coda rather than an interlude to another verse. “This could be . . .”
2:51–3:39	<b>Coda</b> , 16 mm. + fade	Opening guitar riff is used as the basis for this section, beginning with a reprise of the introduction that is then stretched to create the coda. Jagger improvises vocally over backing vocals and the song fades out. “Baby the last time . . .”